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ABSTRACT

Dramatic changes in school calendars create the need for compensating changes in routines of family and community life. For schools undertaking year-round programs the extent to which families and communities are willing and able to make necessary adjustments certainly bears on the educational programs. Therefore well conceived efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of year-round school must consider the impact of the change on families involved in the program and the responses of families to these programs. An assessment of parent attitudes toward and information about year-round school is clearly a legitimate area of concern in the overall evaluation design for the Virginia Beach 45-15 pilot program. It was for the purpose of developing a systematic evaluation of the impact of year-round school on the attitude of parents that the data reported herein were collected. Data related to parent attitudes toward the 45-15 pilot program is reported here, and parents' responses to the changes they perceive to be required of them in order to accommodate the 45-15 pilot program are assessed. (Author/BJG)

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ED109159

A SURVEY OF PARENT ATTITUDES TOWARD AND PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE VIRGINIA BEACH 45-15 PILOT PROGRAM

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Presented to:
The Virginia Beach City Public Schools
By Schlechty Associates
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Dramatic changes in school calendars create the need for compensating changes in routines of family and community life. For schools undertaking year-round programs the extent to which families and communities are willing and able to make necessary adjustments certainly bears on the educational programs. Therefore well conceived efforts to evaluate the effectiveness of year-round school must consider the impact of the change on families involved in the program and the responses of families to these programs. An assessment of parent attitudes toward and information about year-round school is clearly a legitimate area of concern in the overall evaluation design for the Virginia Beach 45-15 pilot program. It was for the purpose of developing a systematic evaluation of the impact of year-round school on the attitude of parents that the data reported herein were collected. The overall design of the research was detailed in a proposal submitted to the Virginia Beach Schools. Further comment on this design as well as a detailed research report will be presented to the Virginia Beach schools at a future date (November, 1974).

The report presented here is the second interim report submitted to the Virginia Beach City Public Schools by Schlechty Associates. The first report was submitted April 1, 1973, and centered on an assessment of parent information about the 45-15 pilot program. The present report is concerned with data related to parent attitudes toward the 45-15 pilot program, as well as some assessment concerning parents' responses to the changes they perceive to be required of them in order to accommodate the 45-15 pilot program.

The April 1, 1973, report and the present report are based on data developed from parent responses to a questionnaire administered by Schlechty Associates around March 1, 1973.[1] These data will serve as baseline information in a long run effort to evaluate the impact of the 45-15 pilot program. At the present time the data have been prepared in a way that provide concerned parties with a description of these responses. The reader is cautioned, however, that at this point it would be unwise to move much beyond description. Explanatory statements will necessarily be postponed until the final phase of the study is completed.

In the final phase of this study a second questionnaire will be administered. It will then be possible to begin to make some inferences about the effects of the 45-15 pilot program on parent attitudes as well as make some assessment about parents' responses to the changes the program necessitates. The data to be presented represents an accurate picture of parent responses to our questions at the time the questionnaire was administered but in no way represents the findings or conclusions of Schlechty Associates concerning the impact of the 45-15 pilot program on the attitudes of parents. Whether these same responses would be obtained today is a question that cannot be answered. In the long run these data along with other data to be collected may serve as a basis upon which policy related assessments can be made, but at present policy makers should use the data with considerable caution.

[1]Details concerning the construction and administration of the questionnaire were reported in the initial report (April 1, 1973). The interested reader is referred to this document. The only point that should be added is that the attitude and opinion portion of the questionnaire were submitted to the same procedures as was the information section with the exception that the unique characteristics of attitude type questions make reliability estimates irrelevant to report.

THE SAMPLE

The orignial sample for this study was to include one thousand parents, eight hundred parents from the four pilot schools -- Holland, Plaza, Windsor Woods, Windsor Oaks -- and two hundred parents from two comparison schools -- Brookwood and Lynnhaven. This sample size (approximately 25 per cent) is sufficiently large to yield highly reliable results and well exceeds the lower limits of sample size generally accepted in survey research.

In conversations with building principals it became clear that research considerations are not the only considerations appropriate to an undertaking of this type. The layman's understanding of sampling procedures and a general distrust of findings concerning a population's attitudes when everyone is not "asked" raised questions concerning the public credibility of any findings (particularly in the pilot schools) based on anything less than a total universe of the population. Therefore Schlechty Associates agreed to send questionnaires to every parent in the pilot schools, although the decision to select a scientifically drawn sample in the comparison schools was maintained. This resulted in a total N of 2008 in the pilot schools and 205 in the comparison schools. The return rate was quite high in both the pilot schools and the comparison schools.[2]

It seems clear that the parents in both the pilot and comparison schools were highly motivated to complete the questionnaire. In part this motivation may result from the inherent interest parents have in the topic, in part it may result from the fact that the distribution and follow-up system permitted the use of established school channels,[3] and part of the response

[2]See TABLE 1.

[3]See APPENDIX A for a description of the distribution system.

School	Number of Questionnaires Sent Out	Returned		Blank	Percent Usable
		Initial	Follow-up		
(1) Brookwood	101	92	7	1	97.5
(2) Lynnhaven	104	80	20	7	89.5
(3) Holland	586	463	112	4	97.4
(4) Plaza	463	406	54	9	97.2
(5) Windsor Woods	453	443	7	6	97.3
(6) Windsor Oaks	506	496	10	2	99.0

TABLE 1 -- Questionnaires Returned by Number and Per Cent

might be due to the general community knowledge concerning the completion of tedious forms. (The majority of the parents are employed in government related activities.) But certainly a good portion of the response can be taken as a reflection of the degree to which parents in the Virginia Beach schools (at least those involved in this study) feel a positive committment to the education of their children and as indication of their willingness to take time out of busy schedules to provide the school with needed assistance. A dramatic drop in the return rate of questionnaires in the next administration of the questionnaire would necessarily need to be considered as a possible indicator of the effect of a shift in parent attitudes and should be carefully monitored.

POPULTAION CHARACTERISTICS

As Table 2 indicates the populations in the comparison schools and the pilot schools are generally quite comparable, at least in terms of those variables the investigators assumed might bear on responses. Specifically, it was assumed that the unique problems transfers might create for military families might make the father's occupation a potentially significant variable. As can be seen from Table 2 the populations of all schools are generally quite similar in occupational make up, although there is enough variation that there may be need to control for this variable in the final analysis of data.

It was also assumed that working mothers confront unique problems when facing the prospect of year-round school, so this was a variable that needed to be dealt with and/or accounted for. As can be seen from Table 2 the school populations are roughly similar in this dimension also, although the final evaluation must contain treatments that deal with this variable.

School	Percent Military	Percent Civilian	Mother's Employment Status: Percent Full Time	Percent Part Time	Percent Not Employed	Percent with Pre-School	Percent with Junior High School	Total Usable Questionnaires	Total Parents in Sample
(1) Brookwood	48.4	51.6	34.7	8.6	56.7	32.0	53.4	98	101
(2) Lynnhaven	50.6	49.4	28.0	9.6	62.4	51.5	44.1	92	104
(3) Holland	58.6	41.4	27.6	8.8	63.6	32.1	35.3	571	586
(4) Plaza	44.0	56.0	27.8	10.6	61.6	37.4	53.8	451	463
(5) Windsor Woods	47.3	52.7	23.9	9.4	67.7	35.5	46.8	444	453
(6) Windsor Oaks	51.3	48.7	24.2	8.7	67.1	37.0	49.1	505	506
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	50.9	49.1	25.9	9.4	64.7	38.2	48.6	1971	2008
All Comparison Schools (1 & 2)	49.9	50.1	31.3	8.2	59.5	41.8	48.7	190	205

TABLE 2 -- Population Characteristics of Pilot Schools and Comparison Schools By Percent

Finally, it was felt that parents with children not in school, or with children in schools not on a year-round cycle might view the 45-15 pilot program differently. Therefore some effort was expended to determine the degree to which the populations were comparable on this dimension. As can be seen from Table 2 the schools are quite comparable.

All of the foregoing is by way of saying that while there are minor variations between and among school populations most of these variations seem to be sufficiently slight to judge that the pilot schools and the comparison schools are quite comparable. Furthermore, given present samples and populations and assuming that no dramatic population shifts occur over the next year it seems fair to say that any variations that do develop between and among populations will probably be due to some factor other than a unique characteristic of the school population, e.g., an effect of the 45-15 pilot program.

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The data to be presented can be broken into four general categories. (1) Data bearing on parents' attitudes toward school in general and the 45-15 pilot program in particular, (2) Data related to the parents' perception of the impact of the 45-15 pilot program on their lives and the lives of others, (3) Data related to the degree to which parents agree with or accept the drift and thrust of official policy statements about the 45-15 pilot program, (4) General indicators of parent concern and response.

PARENT ATTITUDES

One of the most impressive findings is the degree to which the parents in the study's population evidenced positive attitudes and evaluations of

the schools their children are now attending. In a time when schools in general are being criticized one would anticipate a significant residue of hostile feelings toward schools and schooling in almost any community, yet the parents in this study were almost unanimously positive toward their present experience with schools in Virginia Beach. (See Table 3) This speaks well for the schools, but it also suggests that significant deteriorations in this attitude should be taken as a strong indicator of programmatic effects. Especially would this be the case if deterioration of attitude were to occur in the pilot schools but not in the comparison schools. On the other hand one should not anticipate a significant improvement in parent attitude toward school as a result of the 45-15 program, as there is little room for dramatic improvement.[4]

As might be expected there is a high correlation between parent attitudes toward year-round school in general and the Virginia Beach pilot program in particular (See Tables 4 and 5). But what is more interesting is the degree to which the populations in the pilot schools and the control schools differ with regard to expressed attitudes toward both the general concept of year-round school and the 45-15 pilot program (Chi square test of significance was run as a matter of curiosity and the differences were found to be significant at the .01 level). Whether these differences are due to some unique characteristics in the populations or due to some effect of committment to the program cannot be determined, but the baseline data are sufficiently clear that there will be a solid base for future comparisons.

[4]The reader will note some variations from school to school which may be significant but this determination cannot be made at present. In the future, however, the investigators will be alert to possible shifts between schools as well as within schools.

School	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsatisfactory
(1) Brookwood	29.2	54.2	12.5	2.1	2.1
(2) Lynnhaven	23.1	63.7	12.1	1.1	--
(3) Holland	18.9	51.9	24.6	2.7	2.0
(4) Plaza	13.4	55.6	25.6	3.4	2.0
(5) Windsor Woods	23.3	59.9	15.0	.7	1.2
(6) Windsor Oaks	27.1	56.9	13.4	1.2	1.4
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	20.7	55.8	19.8	2.0	1.7
Positive Attitude	26.3	54.5	17.1	1.3	.8
Negative Attitude	18.5	50.5	24.6	3.8	2.7
Undecided	18.0	61.8	17.7	1.0	1.4

TABLE 3 -- Parents' Evaluations of the Virginia Beach Schools Which Their Children are now Attending by Per Cent.

SCHOOL	Positive	Negative	Undecided
(1) Brookwood	22.7	43.3	34.0
(2) Lynnhaven	20.4	44.1	35.5
(3) Holland	33.3	33.3	33.5
(4) Plaza	30.2	32.2	37.6
(5) Windsor Woods	30.7	33.2	36.1
(6) Windsor Oaks	32.2	27.6	40.2
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	31.7	31.6	36.7
Positive Attitude* toward 45-15	90.6	2.3	7.1
Negative Attitude toward 45-15	4.4	87.4	8.2
Undecided About 45-15	5.7	5.6	88.7

TABLE 4 -- Per Cent Responses to the statement: "If you were to characterize your attitude toward the general idea of year around school, which word most accurately reflects your attitude."

* Note on this table and all tables which follow this one (except Table 5) data are presented categorized by school and by response concerning characterization of attitude toward 45-15 Pilot Program. See Table 5 for precise per cents of respondents who characterized their attitude toward the 45-15 Pilot Program as positive, negative and undecided.

School	Positive	Negative	Undecided
(1) Brookwood	18.6	45.4	36.1
(2) Lynnhaven	21.5	43.0	35.5
(3) Holland	31.3	34.3	34.3
(4) Plaza	29.7	34.9	35.4
(5) Windsor Woods	30.0	34.1	35.9
(6) Windsor Oaks	33.2	28.8	38.0
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	31.1	33.0	35.9

TABLE 5 -- Statement to which response was given: "If you were to characterize your attitude toward the Virginia Beach 45-15 pilot program, which word most accurately reflects your attitude."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

In general the data seems to warrant three assertions. (1) Parents in both the pilot and control schools are generally quite positive toward the Virginia Beach School Programs. (2) Parents in the pilot schools have not rejected the 45-15 pilot program although there is a great deal of uncertainty which may very well crystalize one way or the other over the next year. (3) It is reasonable to speculate that the attitudes of parents in the pilot schools is quite flexible although the pilot school parents are generally much more positive and much less negative toward the 45-15 pilot program than are parents in the comparison schools.

IMPACT OF THE 45-15 PILOT PROGRAM

Parents were asked to respond to a variety of statements designed to provide an opportunity for them to indicate their perceptions of the impact of the 45-15 pilot program on their lives, the lives of their children and the life of the community. The statements or questions along with a detailed break down -- by per cent -- are presented in Tables 6 through 17.

In general there is little variation between and among schools although some of the variations are probably statistically significant. (Statistical significance has not been reported here for the simple reason that such information is irrelevant at this time. In the final report where comparisons are legitimate and called for, careful attention will be given to statistical analysis and detailed data will be reported.) What is more important is the systematic differences that appear between those who have indicated they are positive toward the program and those who have indicated they are negative. Such differences are to be expected, but once again the differences are sufficiently dramatic that any shifts which take place over the next year should be easily detected and should allow the possibility of making some well grounded statements concerning program effects.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	53.2	35.1	7.4	2.1	2.1
	(2) Lynnhaven	44.4	41.1	8.9	5.6	--
	(3) Holland	47.0	39.5	4.5	5.0	3.9
	(4) Plaza	51.5	36.2	5.9	3.2	3.2
	(5) Windsor Woods	45.3	38.9	7.6	3.7	4.6
	(6) Windsor Oaks	46.4	41.8	5.0	2.8	4.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	47.5	39.2	5.6	3.7	3.9
ATTITUDE	Positive	21.1	57.4	7.4	7.4	6.6
	Negative	81.1	13.1	1.4	.8	3.6
	Undecided	39.7	47.2	8.0	3.2	1.9

TABLE 6 -- Statement to which response was given: "The 45-15 program will cause some disruptions in family routine."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	5.4	8.7	58.7	9.8	17.4
	(2) Lynnhaven	7.7	9.9	51.6	9.9	20.9
	(3) Holland	9.0	13.2	44.9	12.3	20.7
	(4) Plaza	5.8	14.1	51.4	10.9	17.8
	(5) Windsor Woods	8.8	12.9	50.5	7.8	20.0
	(6) Windsor Oaks	6.7	13.4	53.0	8.9	18.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	7.6	13.4	49.7	10.1	19.2
ATTITUDE	Positive	13.9	20.5	51.2	7.1	7.3
	Negative	3.5	6.5	41.7	11.6	36.6
	Undecided	5.9	13.3	55.8	11.3	13.8

TABLE 7 -- Statement to which response was given: "School officials have developed satisfactory solutions to the problems this pilot program creates for the transfer of military dependents."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	15.8	14.7	35.8	10.5	23.2
(2) Lynnhaven	16.3	23.9	28.3	7.6	23.9
(3) Holland	17.7	19.7	27.8	11.3	23.5
(4) Plaza	19.8	20.7	30.1	11.7	17.7
(5) Windsor Woods	24.7	19.2	28.1	10.3	17.8
(6) Windsor Oaks	24.5	18.9	23.3	12.3	20.9
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	21.5	19.6	27.2	11.4	20.2
ATTITUDE					
Positive	47.9	26.6	15.7	5.0	4.8
Negative	5.5	9.3	24.0	14.2	46.9
Undecided	13.0	22.9	40.3	14.5	9.3

TABLE 8 -- Statement to which response was given: "Children will like school as much under the 45-15 plan as under the traditional calendar."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	46.3	17.9	16.8	12.6	6.3
(2) Lynnhaven	33.7	34.8	19.6	9.8	2.2
(3) Holland	33.6	20.3	22.1	13.1	11.0
(4) Plaza	42.1	22.2	16.2	12.6	6.9
(5) Windsor Woods	33.6	22.3	23.2	9.9	11.0
(6) Windsor Oaks	31.3	25.6	19.0	12.7	11.5
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	34.9	22.5	20.2	12.2	10.2
Positive	11.6	21.9	24.5	22.5	19.5
Negative	66.3	15.1	10.5	3.8	4.3
Undecided	26.6	30.0	25.3	10.7	7.4

TABLE 9 -- Statement to which response was given: "The 45-15 pilot program creates unacceptable hardships for working mothers."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	17.0	22.3	23.4	18.1	19.1
(2) Lynnhaven	20.7	34.8	12.0	12.0	20.7
(3) Holland	29.5	24.8	18.2	10:8	16.7
(4) Plaza	24.3	26.1	22.7	13.5	13.5
(5) Windsor Woods	28.4	24.3	21.8	10.8	14.7
(6) Windsor Oaks	32.5	23.8	16.1	13.7	13.9
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	28.8	24.7	19.5	12.2	14.8
Positive	53.3	25.0	11.6	6.3	3.8
Negative	11.2	20.7	19.3	16.4	32.4
Undecided	23.5	28.2	26.6	13.4	8.3

TABLE 10 -- Statement to which response was given: "For the most part the 45-15 plan will not eliminate traditional community activities like little league, recreation, and Boy Scouts."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	8.5	19.1	20.2	17.0	35.1
(2) Lynnhaven	5.5	19.8	23.1	15.4	36.3
(3) Holland	11.9	20.7	22.3	17.1	27.9
(4) Plaza	9.2	18.6	23.6	16.7	31.9
(5) Windsor Woods	11.0	18.6	24.3	17.9	28.2
(6) Windsor Oaks	12.7	18.3	21.4	18.5	29.0
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	11.3	19.1	22.8	17.6	29.2
Positive	26.3	34.0	18.3	13.7	7.7
Negative	3.2	4.7	12.6	16.0	63.5
Undecided	5.4	19.2	36.4	22.6	16.4

TABLE 11 -- Statement to which response was given: "The potential of the 45-15 program justifies any inconvenience it may cause to parents or children."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	34.7	16.8	20.0	10.5	17.9
(2) Lynnhaven	37.0	29.3	10.9	10.9	12.0
(3) Holland	43.5	22.2	19.7	5.7	8.8
(4) Plaza	38.4	22.3	21.8	7.0	10.5
(5) Windsor Woods	44.3	23.3	20.3	3.2	8.9
(6) Windsor Oaks	40.8	22.7	20.7	6.4	9.4
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	41.8	22.6	20.6	5.6	9.4
Positive	72.8	17.7	6.8	1.3	1.5
Negative	13.7	21.5	27.7	10.2	23.2
Undecided	37.2	28.0	26.1	5.2	3.5

TABLE 12 -- Statement to which response was given: "Children will learn as much under the 45-15 plan as under the traditional calendar."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	3.2	8.6	8.6	30.1	49.5
(2) Lynnhaven	5.6	18.9	11.1	23.3	41.1
(3) Holland	8.8	13.5	10.5	24.9	42.3
(4) Plaza	4.6	15.9	14.1	22.9	42.5
(5) Windsor Woods	10.8	11.9	12.8	25.7	38.8
(6) Windsor Oaks	7.4	16.9	10.7	26.0	39.0
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	8.0	14.6	11.9	24.9	40.7
Positive	14.2	27.3	14.2	27.3	16.9
Negative	4.3	3.5	4.4	13.8	74.0
Undecided	5.8	13.6	16.6	32.9	31.0

TABLE 13 -- Statement to which response was given: "The 45-15 program will have little significant impact on the lives of parents or students."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

School	A Great Deal	Somewhat	Not At All
(1) Brookwood	34.4	38.7	26.9
(2) Lynnhaven	34.4	31.2	34.4
(3) Holland	35.0	41.1	23.9
(4) Plaza	31.1	39.9	29.0
(5) Windsor Woods	27.0	40.5	32.5
(6) Windsor Oaks	32.9	40.9	26.1
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	31.8	40.6	27.6
Positive Attitude	8.1	36.2	55.7
Negative Attitude	64.2	29.5	6.2
Undecided	22.5	54.8	22.7

TABLE 14-- Question to which response was given: "How will the 45-15 pilot program affect your family vacation?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		YES	NO	UNDECIDED
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	27.1	52.1	20.8
	(2) Lynnhaven	27.2	52.2	20.7
	(3) Holland	39.5	41.7	18.8
	(4) Plaza	36.4	43.8	19.8
	(5) Windsor Woods	27.9	55.6	16.5
	(6) Windsor Oaks	31.2	52.8	16.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	34.1	48.2	17.8
ATTITUDE	Positive	14.3	72.8	12.9
	Negative	57.8	24.1	18.1
	Undecided	29.4	48.8	21.8

TABLE 15 -- Question to which response was given: "Will the 45-15 pilot program cause a significant change in your household budget for items such as babysitting, clothing, food and spending?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		YES	NO	UNCERTAIN
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	2.1	78.1	19.8
	(2) Lynnhaven	2.2	71.1	26.7
	(3) Holland	81.2	59.4	9.4
	(4) Plaza	1.3	89.5	9.2
	(5) Windsor Woods	3.4	89.6	7.0
	(6) Windsor Oaks	38.4	57.8	3.8
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	19.9	72.7	7.4
ATTITUDE	Positive	16.6	78.5	4.9
	Negative	22.8	66.8	10.5
	Undecided	20.3	73.0	6.7

TABLE 16 -- Question to which response was given: "Will your child (children) be assigned to a different school building next year as a result of the 45-15 pilot program?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	33.3	19.8	13.5	22.9	10.4
	(2) Lynnhaven	25.3	23.1	22.0	22.0	7.7
	(3) Holland	26.0	19.4	15.6	25.4	13.6
	(4) Plaza	26.1	20.0	16.7	23.9	13.3
	(5) Windsor Woods	24.6	18.2	17.0	22.1	18.2
	(6) Windsor Oaks	21.7	19.9	16.5	24.9	17.1
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	24.6	19.4	16.4	24.2	15.5
ATTITUDE	Positive	2.6	6.6	9.2	43.5	38.1
	Negative	65.6	19.9	6.2	5.1	3.3
	Undecided	6.3	30.1	32.2	24.7	6.7

TABLE 17 -- Statement to which response was given: "The 45-15 program will cause too much disruption to routines of family and community life to justify the pilot program."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

There does seem to be a tendency on the part of some positive parents to minimize what might be negative factors, sometimes to the point of near distortion (See for example Tables 6 and 13). A question to be answered is "to what extent do any shifts in attitudes from positive to negative or negative to positive seem to correlate with the development of more accurate perceptions of the program?"

There seems to be much greater differences of opinion between positive and negative parents on matters relating to family inconvenience, e.g., vacations, than on matters pertaining to educational programs. This tendency is not dramatic but it is clear. It would seem, therefore, that it may be that one of the more crucial areas of policy concern would be with areas normally considered tangential to schooling, e.g., how does one deal with the "inconvenience" factor or perceptions thereof?

PARENT AGREEMENT WITH OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

A number of questions and statements were designed to determine the extent to which parents shared the views set forth in various public releases from the school system. Many of these statements were direct quotes from public releases while all were very close paraphrases. Taken in conjunction with the data presented in the April report it seems clear that parents generally accept the statements of the school board as accurate and as having credibility. Even those parents who are negative toward the program generally take school officials "at their word." This is a laudatory situation and one that provides an excellent backdrop against which to try new programs.

The statement presented in Table 18 was an effort to determine the extent to which parents were aware of school board efforts to gain expressions of

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	25.5	24.5	20.2	12.8	17.0
	(2) Lynnhaven	21.3	27.0	27.0	12.4	12.4
	(3) Holland	20.9	21.1	22.2	10.9	24.9
	(4) Plaza	21.2	23.5	16.8	16.4	22.1
	(5) Windsor Woods	21.9	23.8	17.5	10.5	26.3
	(6) Windsor Oaks	21.0	26.4	16.7	13.1	22.8
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	21.2	23.6	18.5	12.6	24.0
ATTITUDE	Positive	32.2	26.1	20.1	9.0	12.6
	Negative	14.2	18.8	15.5	12.1	39.3
	Undecided	17.9	25.8	19.8	16.3	20.1

TABLE 18 -- Statement to which response was given: "Parents did have an opportunity to voice their opinion on trying the 45-15 pilot program."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

opinions before launching into the program. Clearly a plurality of the pilot school parents felt they had an opportunity to express their opinions, and if one excludes the negative parents the majority of parents felt they had such an opportunity. Furthermore there is reason to believe that the negative parents' responses are more directed toward the fact that their particular advice was not taken rather than the fact that they were not heard. For example 75 free responses on the questionnaires contained a message that could be summarized as "Yes we had the chance to say what we thought but we still have the program." In addition, 21.1 per cent of the negative parents reported having participated in the public hearings on alternatives for housing school populations (See Table 23) as opposed to only 14.3 per cent of the positive parents.

The data presented in Table 19 would seem to support the inference that parents are generally convinced the school system will stick to the committment to carefully evaluate the program and live by whatever conclusions seem warranted. While this is to be hoped for and expected, in this day of "credibility gaps" it is reassuring to find such an expression of confidence. Frequently when schools are singled out for some new program parents react in a way that suggests that they feel they are being "picked on". Once again it is to the credit of both the school system and the parents that such an attitude <u>does not</u> prevail at Virginia Beach. While the data presented in Tables 20 through 22 do not "prove" this point they do lend strong support to the assertion,

GENERAL INDICATORS

The data presented in Tables 24 through 30 are presented basically as an indication of existing practices and sentiment among parents.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	21.3	13.8	31.9	12.8	20.2
	(2) Lynnhaven	13.3	17.8	38.9	11.1	18.9
	(3) Holland	20.0	13.0	27.1	16.6	23.3
	(4) Plaza	18.3	12.6	28.8	16.4	24.0
	(5) Windsor Woods	16.3	11.7	33.3	17.2	21.6
	(6) Windsor Oaks	14.9	14.5	26.7	17.3	26.7
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	17.4	13.0	28.8	16.9	23.9
ATTITUDE	Positive	8.8	9.6	22.8	23.8	35.0
	Negative	33.4	15.7	27.9	8.7	14.3
	Undecided	10.3	13.4	34.8	18.4	23.0

TABLE 19 -- Statement to which response was given: "The pilot 45-15 program will probably be continued, even if the evaluations of the program are negative."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	32.3	25.8	32.3	1.1	8.6
(2) Lynnhaven	20.7	30.4	37.0	5.4	6.5
(3) Holland	43.1	23.9	24.2	1.8	7.0
(4) Plaza	31.0	27.6	19.1	4.4	17.9
(5) Windsor Woods	40.2	23.4	21.4	3.9	11.0
(6) Windsor Oaks	48.7	28,8	12.9	2.8	6.8
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	41.2	25.9	19.5	3.1	10.3
Positive	58.6	23.0	14.6	1.3	2.5
Negative	27.1	25.4	21.7	3.5	22.4
Undecided	38.8	28.9	21.8	4.4	6.1

TABLE 20 -- Statement to which response was given: "The reasons Windsor Oaks, Windsor Woods, Holland and Plaza elementary schools were selected as pilot schools were basically related to enrollment and geographic considerations."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	26.6	10.6	25.5	17.0	20.2
	(2) Lynnhaven	14.1	29.3	27.2	12.0	17.4
	(3) Holland	19.7	20.9	15.2	18.8	25.5
	(4) Plaza	18.5	19.9	17.4	19.0	25.2
	(5) Windsor Woods	24.6	18.9	17.9	16.8	21.8
	(6) Windsor Oaks	22.6	19.6	12.9	19.8	25.1
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	21.3	19.9	15.7	18.6	24.5
ATTITUDE	Positive	30.3	22.7	10.6	18.7	17.7
	Negative	19.7	14.3	13.6	15.8	36.6
	Undecided	14.9	22.6	22.2	21.1	19.2

TABLE 21 -- Statement to which response was given: "The 45-15 program is not an educational experiment because the only thing it affects is the time of attendance."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	56.4	18.1	18.1	3.2	4.3
	(2) Lynnhaven	64.1	19.6	12.0	3.3	1.1
	(3) Holland	64.4	23.1	7.5	1.8	3.2
	(4) Plaza	62.4	22.1	10.0	2.1	3.4
	(5) Windsor Woods	62.9	23.8	8.9	1.6	2.7
	(6) Windsor Oaks	70.2	19.0	5.8	2.0	3.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	65.1	22.0	8.0	1.9	3.1
ATTITUDE	Positive	79.2	16.0	3.0	1.0	.8
	Negative	51.7	26.0	13.2	2.8	6.3
	Undecided	65.0	23.5	7.5	1.7	2.2

TABLE 22 -- Statement to which response was given: "The basic reason for the 45-15 pilot program is to provide classroom space to house the student population."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		YES	NO
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	19.8	30.2
	(2) Lynnhaven	11.8	88.2
	(3) Holland	17.2	82.9
	(4) Plaza	19.8	80.2
	(5) Windsor Woods	10.0	90.0
	(6) Windsor Oaks	15.5	84.5
	All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	15.7	84.2
ATTITUDE	Positive	14.3	85.7
	Negative	21.1	78.9
	Undecided	12.1	87.9

TABLE 23 -- Question to which response was given: "Did you or your spouse participate in public hearings on alternatives for housing the school population?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		YES	NO	UNDECIDED
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	6.2	83.5	10.3
	(2) Lynnhaven	7.5	74.2	18.3
	(3) Holland	92.2	4.1	3.7
	(4) Plaza	94.8	2.9	2.2
	(5) Windsor Woods	91.6	4.8	3.6
	(6) Windsor Oaks	95.8	2.4	1.8
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	93.6	3.5	2.9
ATTITUDE	Positive	93.9	3.3	2.8
	Negative	94.1	3.6	2.3
	Undecided	92.8	3.7	3.4

TABLE 24 -- Question to which response was given: "Will any of your children be involved in the 45-15 pilot program next year?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		YES	NO	UNDECIDED
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	89.7	2.1	8.2
	(2) Lynnhaven	86.0	3.2	10.8
	(3) Holland	85.5	4.4	10.1
	(4) Plaza	87.2	3.4	9.4
	(5) Windsor Woods	88.4	3.2	8.4
	(6) Windsor Oaks	90.9	2.2	7.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	87.9	3.3	8.8
ATTITUDE	Positive	91.3	3.8	4.9
	Negative	83.2	4.2	12.6
	Undecided	89.3	2.1	8.6

TABLE 25 -- Question to which response was given: "Do you plan to live in Virginia Beach next Year?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Y E S	N O
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	34.0	66.0
	(2) Lynnhaven	31.2	68.9
	(3) Holland	36.2	63.9
	(4) Plaza	34.0	66.0
	(5) Windsor Woods	37.3	62.7
	(6) Windsor Oaks	35.3	64.7
	All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	35.7	64.3
ATTITUDE	Positive	39.8	60.2
	Negative	35.0	65.0
	Undecided	32.8	67.2

TABLE 26 -- Question to which response was given: "The schools sponsored coffees to discuss the 45-15 program. Did you or your spouse attend any of these school sponsored coffees?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

	YES	NO
SCHOOL		
(1) Brookwood	49.5	50.5
(2) Lynnhaven	46.7	53.3
(3) Holland	44.5	55.4
(4) Plaza	44.6	55.4
(5) Windsor Woods	42.3	57.7
(6) Windsor Oaks	31.7	68.3
All Pilot Schools (3, 4, 5, & 6)	40.8	59.3
ATTITUDE		
Positive	40.1	59.9
Negative	41.2	58.8
Undecided	40.9	59.1

TABLE 27 -- Question to which response was given: "Do you routinely attend PTA meetings?"

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	33.7	22.1	18.9	5.3	20.0
	(2) Lynnhaven	32.6	21.7	19.6	6.5	19.6
	(3) Holland	48.7	19.3	18.1	3.8	10.1
	(4) Plaza	50.0	17.3	15.9	2.5	14.3
	(5) Windsor Woods	51.3	19.5	17.2	2.1	10.1
	(6) Windsor Oaks	49.4	20.6	16.6	3.0	10.3
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	49.8	19.2	17.0	2.9	11.1
ATTITUDE	Positive	78.5	15.0	4.6	1.0	.8
	Negative	22.7	16.3	22.7	7.5	30.8
	Undecided	49.1	25.6	22.7	.4	2.2

TABLE 28 -- Statement to which response was given: "If the 45-15 program is successful it should be expanded to other elementary schools."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

		Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
SCHOOL	(1) Brookwood	27.4	16.8	17.9	5.3	32.6
	(2) Lynnhaven	29.3	21.7	20.7	8.7	19.6
	(3) Holland	38.3	13.5	20.0	6.5	21.8
	(4) Plaza	32.9	15.9	17.9	4.8	28.5
	(5) Windsor Woods	34.1	15.2	21.7	4.6	24.4
	(6) Windsor Oaks	37.2	16.0	17.8	7.1	22.0
	All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	35.8	15.1	19.3	5.8	24.0
ATTITUDE	Positive	61.6	14.0	11.0	4.5	9.0
	Negative	14.4	10.8	19.8	5.9	49.0
	Undecided	32.9	19.9	26.1	7.0	14.1

TABLE 29 -- Statement to which response was given: "If the 45-15 program proves effective it should be expanded to junior and senior high schools."

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

SCHOOL / ATTITUDE	Strongly Agree	Mildly Agree	Undecided	Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Brookwood	52.6	14.7	12.6	9.5	10.5
(2) Lynnhaven	46.7	21.7	13.0	9.8	8.7
(3) Holland	39.1	12.5	14.9	15.1	18.5
(4) Plaza	45.9	12.8	11.4	12.8	17.1
(5) Windsor Woods	39.0	11.9	15.8	15.1	18.1
(6) Windsor Oaks	34.3	15.5	14.1	15.5	20.7
All Pilot Schools (3,4,5, & 6)	39.4	13.2	14.1	14.7	18.7
Positive	15.5	10.6	12.5	23.6	37.8
Negative	72.3	9.1	8.8	4.1	5.7
Undecided	29.9	19.3	20.3	16.6	13.8

TABLE 30 -- Statement to which response was given: "Parents should be permitted to decide whether or not their children will participate in the 45-15 program.

Data presented by per cent responding in each category.

Little meaning or significance can be attached to these data at this point; but dramatic changes in these indicators over the next year would provide some basis for judgments about programmatic effects.

OBSERVATIONS

Clearly it would be unwise to make sweeping statements about parental concerns and involvement but the investigators cannot resist observing that the drift and thrust of all of these indicators is that the parents in the pilot schools are actively concerned about their schools and positively committed to supporting school programs.

Two concluding observations seem in order:

(1) Parents seem to be willing to give the 45-15 program a chance. Although there is no overwhelming positive sentiment toward the program, neither are the parents overwhelming negative. For the most part it would appear that the wait and see attitude is due to an honest respect for existing school policy and a generalized feeling that school policy is both creditable and aimed toward achieving worthwhile goals.

(2) The data now collected is sufficiently complete and descrete to make solid evaluations of the impact of year-round school on parent attitudes -- at least in Virginia Beach Pilot Schools -- possible. Thus the basic research intent of the initial data collection has been realized.

APPENDIX A

Instructions Concerning Administration of 45-15 Parent Attitude Questionnaire

1. All principals in the pilot schools and the control schools are provided with questionnaires, envelopes, and paper clips. The quantity of each is sufficient to assure each family involved in the study will have access to a questionnaire.

2. On Tuesday, February 27, 1973, each family should receive a questionnaire and a return envelope. In order to assure that this happens, the following procedure should be followed: (These procedures apply only to the pilot schools -- not the control schools.)

   a. One child per family should be designated to take the questionnaire home and return it to the school. Principals should use their routine distribution system, but it is imperative that each family receive one and only one questionnaire.

   b. The teacher who gives the questionnaire to the designated child should be assigned the responsibility of recording the return of the questionnaire and thereby being in a position to designate the families that did not respond.

   c. The teacher who gives the questionnaire to the designated child should attach one of the return envelopes to the questionnaire with the paper clip provided.

3. On Friday, March 2, 1973, principals should collect all returned questionnaires and place them in a container clearly marked in a fashion that designates both the date (March 2, 1973) and the school e.g., Plaza or Windsor Oaks.

4. On Friday, March 2, 1973, the principals should also get from the teachers a list of the names of the parents who have not returned the questionnaire. It is hoped this number will be sufficiently small so that the principal will be able to contact these parents and request that they return the questionnaire. Extra questionnaires and envelopes have been provided in case the reason for non-return is loss of the questionnaire or envelope.

5. All questionnaires turned in between March 3 and March 9 should be kept separate from those turned in prior to March 2. The reason for this is that if the principal contacts the parents to request a response, this action may influence the parent's response. We want to be able to compare the early returns to the late returns in order to guard against possible contamination.

6. Friday, March 9, 1973, will be the final cut off date for return of questionnaires. Any questionnaires coming in after that time will not be used, although we would like to have them returned to us. We also would like to request that the principal provide us with a complete list of the names of all non-respondent parents. If the non-respondents constitute a large category, we may interview a number of these individuals to check for sample bias.

7. The principals in the comparison schools should follow the same procedures outlined above with the exception that they will distribute the questionnaire to only 100 families within each school. These families have been designated on a random basis, and it is imperative that we get a response from each family designated.

8. Finally, we would like to request that school officials refrain from opening envelopes or attempting to assess responses. We have guaranteed each parent anonimity and request your cooperation in helping us maintain our commitment.

I would personally like to thank you for your help. Without your cooperation this study would be nearly impossible and the result would certainly not be as reliable.